



CURRENCY

Committee on Financial Services

Michael G. Oxley, Chairman

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Subcommittee to Examine Housing Affordability Issues Facing Seniors

The House Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, chaired by U.S. Rep. Marge Roukema (NJ), will hold a hearing on housing struggles faced by the elderly. The hearing will begin at 9:30 a.m. July 17 in room 2128 Rayburn House Office Building.

Older Americans, often living on fixed incomes, are faced with additional hardships in finding and maintaining affordable housing. Special needs, such as wide doors for walkers or wheel chairs, may be needed. Stairs may become a challenge. Deteriorating conditions may be too difficult to repair or keep up with.

Appropriate and affordable senior housing is only part of the problem. Support services, like transportation, housekeeping and meal programs are essential to maintaining independence. Care in a nursing facility is not appropriate or cost-effective for most frail people.

In addition to the special needs seniors face, America's elderly population is growing exponentially - predicted to reach 70 million by the year 2030. To address the rapid growth of the elderly population, the Housing Subcommittee named a commission to develop comprehensive strategies that link affordable shelter with compassionate services through public, private, and public-private partnerships.

The Subcommittee will hear from witnesses representing housing and aging groups on what federal - as well as private and non-profit - housing programs can do to improve the availability of affordable housing for seniors and to meet their special needs.

"Particularly troubling is the fact that low-income seniors are often faced with the choice of no assistance or a nursing home," said Committee Chairman Michael G. Oxley (OH).

"Helping seniors remain in their homes allows them to maintain a connection with their families and their communities."

Scheduled to testify are:

Panel I

- Thomas Slemmer, President, National Church Residences on behalf of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
- Jane O'Dell Baumgarten on behalf of AARP
- Robert Yoder, Sr., Vice President of Yoder Builders and Warrior Run Development on behalf of the Council for Affordable and Rural Housing

Panel II

- Harry Thomas, Executive Director, Seattle Housing Authority
- Janice Monks, Executive Director, American Association of Service Coordinators
- Lee Felgar, Senior Vice President, Development & Acquisitions, Volunteers of America National Services

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